

Message Text

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17

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7155

INFO JCS WASHDC

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S E C R E T BANGKOK 13364

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MASS, TH, MCAP, PFOR

SUBJ: INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

REF: A. STATE 156815

B. BANGKOK 12816

1. MISSION WELCOMES REFTEL'S AUTHORIZATION BEGIN DISCUSSIONS WITH RTG LOOKING TOWARD ICS TURNOVER. FORTUITOUSLY, ONLY DAY OR TWO BEFORE RECEIPT OF REFTEL WE RECEIVED COPY OF JUNE 30 LETTER TO COMUSMACTHAI FROM CHIEF OF STAFF, SUPREME COMMAND, GENERAL KRIANGSAK CHAMANAN, ON SUBJECT OF ICS.

2. TEXT OF KRIANGSAK LETTER FOLLOWS:

BEGIN TEXT. "AS YOU KNOW THE UNITED STATES INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM IN THAILAND CONNECTS OR PASSES NEAR THE MAJORITY OF THE ROYAL THAI MILITARY BASES IN CENTRAL AND NORTHERN THAILAND. THE SYSTEM WAS DESIGNED TO SERVE THE UNITED STATES FORCES WHICH HAVE BEEN STATIONED AT THESE BASES FOR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS. FOR SOME

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YEARS THE ROYAL THAI ARMED FORCES (RTARF) HAVE BEEN WORKING

TO DEVELOP AN INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM SIMILAR TO THE AMERICAN DEFENSE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM, TO BE MANAGED BY OUR MILITARY TELECOMMUNICATIONS AGENCY (MTA) WHICH WAS MODELED ON YOUR DCA CONCEPT. LIKE THE DCS, THIS SYSTEM WOULD REPLACE THE INDIVIDUAL COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS OF THE RTA, RTAF, AND RTN, AND WOULD BE OPERATED BY THE SERVICES UNDER A SINGLE JOINT AGENCY AT THE SUPREME COMMAND LEVEL.

"THIS INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM IS FAR FROM COMPLETE DUE TO SHORTAGES OF EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES. IN THE PAST THE SHORTAGE HAS BEEN PARTLY OFFSET BY THE USE OF CHANNELS ON THE US ICS TO MEET THE MOST CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL. AT PRESENT THE RTARF IS USING APPROXIMATELY 150 CHANNELS ON THE ICS TO MEET CRITICAL REQUIREMENTS. WITH THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE U.S. FORCES FROM THAI BASES AND THE PHASEOUT OF THE ICS THESE CRITICAL COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS WILL BE LOST TO THE RTARF AND AT PRESENT WE HAVE NO MEANS OF REPLACEMENT.

"THEREFORE I WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TURNOVER IN AN OPERATIONS STATUS, ON A PHASED BASIS, THE ICS AND ITS FACILITIES INCLUDING TEST AND MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT WHEN THEY ARE NO LONGER REQUIRED TO SUPPORT THE U.S. FORCES. THE RTARF WOULD PHASE INTO THE ICS SITES, LEARN TO OPERATE AND MAINTAIN THE COMMUNICATIONS AND POWER EQUIPMENT AND CONTINUE TO OPERATE THE SYSTEM WITH A MINIMUM RECONFIGURATION TO MEET RTARF REQUIREMENTS AFTER THE U.S. PERSONNEL LEAVE. IN THE EVENT THAT UNITED STATES AGENCIES HAVE SOME REMAINING COMMUNICATIONS REQUIREMENTS IN AREAS SERVED BY PORTIONS OF THE ICS AFTER TURNOVER TO THE RTARF, THE RTARF WOULD ARRANGE TO FULFILL THESE REQUIREMENTS ALONG WITH THEIR OWN." END TEXT.

3. WHILE DETAILS REMAIN TO BE WORKED OUT, AND WILL SHORTLY BE DISCUSSED AT STAFF LEVEL, SEEMS CLEAR THAT KRIANGSAK'S IDEAS ARE GENERALLY PARALLEL TO THOSE SET FORTH IN REFTEL. WE PARTICULARLY NOTE KRIANGSAK'S REFERENCE TO RESIDUAL U.S. COMMUNICATIONS REQUIREMENTS UPON COMPLETION OF DRAWDOWN.

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THESE RESIDUAL REQUIREMENTS, AND THE INSTALLATIONS THEY IMPLY, COULD BE THE QUID IN RETURM FOR THE QUO OF ICS TURNOVER.

4. AT SOME POINT EARLY IN THE DISCUSSIONS, IT WOULD SERVE OUR INTERESTS IF WE WERE IN A POSITION TO STATE WHAT OUR RESIDUAL REQUIREMENTS ARE GOING TO BE, AND ALSO TO KEY THE PHASED ICS TURNOVER TO THE TIMETABLE FOR OUR FOCE

DRAWDOWNS AND BASE CLOSURES.

5. IN VIEW OF THE RELATIVELY FORTHCOMING POSITION ON SOME
TYPE OF SMALL RESIDUAL U.S. PRESENCE TAKEN BY PRIME MINISTER
KHUKRIT IN HIS RECENT PRESS INTERVIEW BEFORE DEPARTURE FOR
PEKING (REF B), IT APPEARS TO US THAT THE TIMING FOR DETAILED DISCUSS-
ION OF OUR RESIDUAL REQUIREMENTS IS AS GOOD
NOW AS IT IS EVER LIKELY TO BE.

WHITEHOUSE

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